

**Iowa Finance Authority
Section 8 Contract Administration**

2004 Customer Service Survey Results

Introduction

The survey was posted on the IFA website under “Section 8 Contract Administration” on September 17, 2004. A link to the survey was electronically mailed to owners, management agents, and property managers on the same day. The survey return deadline was September 30, 2004.

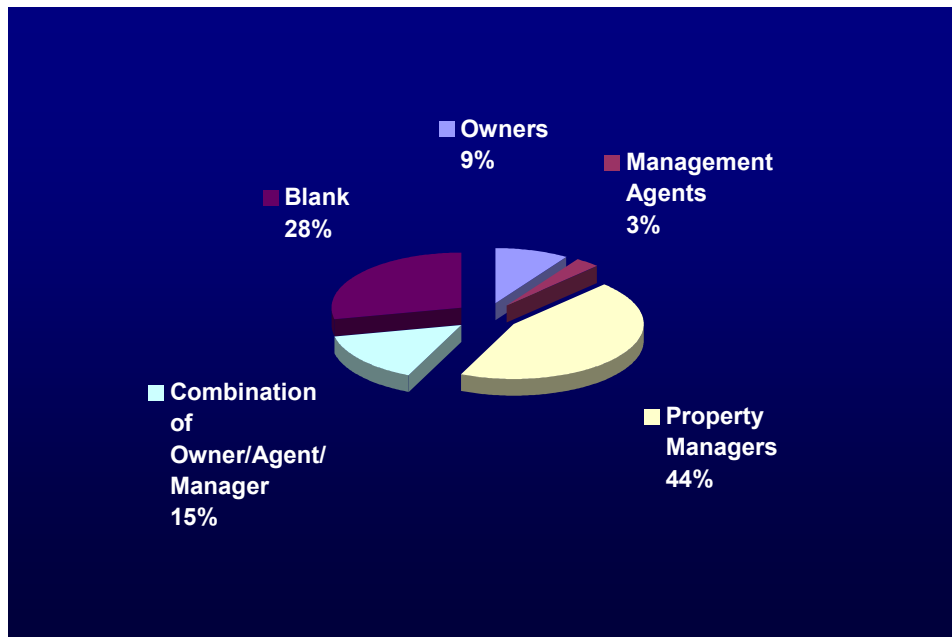
The survey included questions regarding specific core tasks, namely management and occupancy reviews, rental adjustments, and voucher processing. It also included other topics such as special claims, our sub-contractor’s work, customer opinion regarding the Section 8 portion of IFA’s website, and overall satisfaction. The questions differed from previous surveys; therefore no comparison between years has been made for core tasks.

One hundred seventy six surveys were electronically mailed to various individuals. Although measures were put in place electronically to eliminate blank responses, some individuals chose to mail the survey to IFA, thereby allowing questions not to be completed. Network issues caused five surveys to be returned with no data. These surveys were included in the data under the “blank” category. Approximately 18% of surveys were returned. In 2003, the return rate was 20%.

General Information

9% of survey respondents were owners, 3% were management agents, and 44% were property managers, with 15% claiming status as a combination of owner/agent/property manager. The remaining 28% left this category blank.

Types of Respondents



Management and Occupancy Review

63% of respondents stated they participated in a Management and Occupancy Review in the past year. 9% had not participated in a Management and Occupancy Review. 28% left the question blank.

53% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement that IFA staff was courteous and professional when conducting management and occupancy reviews. 13% moderately agreed with the above statement. 34% left the question unanswered.

When asked if technical assistance was provided during the review, 47% of those responding strongly agreed, 16% moderately agreed, and 3% slightly agreed. 34% left the question blank.

Presented with the statement, "The IFA team member who conducted the review responded to phone calls and e-mails within two business days," 59% strongly agreed, 6% moderately agreed, and 3% slightly agreed. 31% left the question blank.

Comments and suggestions to improve the quality and delivery of Management and Occupancy reviews follow:

"We are required to re-update our policies after each inspection. When a policy is amended, it should be thoroughly reviewed so that it does not have to be amended again next year."

"Last year I had [REDACTED]. She did her job very well. This year I understand that I will have [REDACTED]."

"It is frustrating to have "findings" on the review for items I have no control over. For instance, "Person verifying the Social Security income did not date the verification form." What would you expect me to do about this?"

"Coordinate the reviews to better fit property schedule rather than IFA schedule."

"I have always been highly satisfied with the help I get and visits to my site. My direct experience with IFA has been a positive one."

"This is the first time I had participated in this process and I found it very helpful."

"Consistency!"

Follow-up management and occupancy reviews are conducted approximately six months after the annual review, if the overall rating given in the annual review is less than a satisfactory rating. 16% of respondents said they had participated in a follow-up review. 53% had not participated in a follow-up review. 31% left the question blank.

When asked if the follow-up review provided technical assistance needed to ensure HUD regulations are followed, 16% strongly agreed. 3% moderately agreed, and 81% left the question blank.

There were no comments or suggestions to improve the quality and delivery of follow-up reviews.

Rental Adjustments

38% of respondents stated they had requested a rent increase in the past year (outside of the contract renewal process). 34% stated they had not requested a rent increase. 28% left the question unanswered.

38% of respondents strongly agreed the IFA staff was courteous and professional when submitting rental adjustment requests. 3% slightly agreed with the above statement. 59% of respondents left the question blank.

25% of owners/agents/property managers believe the IFA team member who reviewed the rent increase provided technical assistance. 9% moderately agreed, and 3% slightly agreed to the above statement. 63% left the question blank.

When asked if the IFA team member returned phone calls and e-mails within two business days, 38% strongly agreed. 63% left the question blank.

If the rent increase request is denied, the owner/agent/manager is notified why line items in the budget were reduced or eliminated. 38% strongly agreed the reasoning is clear. 3% slightly agree, and 6% moderately disagree. 69% left the question blank.

Comments and suggestions to improve the rent increase process included:

“This year the rent increase went well, compared to last year which to me, was a nightmare. So, I guess I would have to say this year was greatly improved over last year, and I didn't feel that I did that much differently between the two years.”

“The actual technical assistance for the rental increase was handled by someone else. I handled only the necessary papers with the tenants once the actual figures were given to me as the project manager. Hope I answered the above correctly.”

“I have not yet heard how the request is going as the request was forwarded to HUD.”

Contract Renewals

41% of respondents had participated on the contract renewal process in the past year. 31% said they had not taken part in the process. 5% left the question blank. 28% left the question blank.

38% of respondents strongly agreed the IFA staff conducting the contract renewal process was courteous and professional. 3% moderately agreed with this statement. 28% left the question blank.

When presented with the statement, “Technical assistance was provided during the renewal process”, 28% strongly agreed, 6% moderately agreed, and 6% slightly agreed. 59% left the question blank.

When asked if the IFA team member completing the renewal responded to phone calls and e-mails within two business days, 31% strongly agreed, 9% moderately agreed, and 59% left the question unanswered.

Suggestions and comments to improve the contract renewal process follow:

“As I remember, all went well.”

“In instances where the rental increase calculation results in a reduction of \$1 per month, IFA could try to stretch a bit to leave rents at status quo. The amount of staff time spent in making this change, and the corresponding cost, are disproportionately high for the benefit received by the federal treasury.”

“Again, consistency. We have been asked to provide certain documents one time and not other times.”

Voucher Payments

59% of respondents strongly agreed and 9% moderately agreed HAP vouchers were processed in a timely manner. 31% left the question blank.

When asked if the IFA budget staff is courteous and professional, 56% strongly agreed, 9% moderately agreed, and 3% slightly agreed. 31% left the question blank.

47% owners/agents/managers strongly agreed IFA team members provided technical assistance if needed during the voucher process. 16% moderately agreed, 3% slightly agreed, and 34% left the question blank.

50% of respondents strongly agreed the IFA team provided timely response to phone calls and e-mails. 9% expressed a moderate agreement, and 6% expressed slight agreement. 34% left the question unanswered.

IFA staff routinely conducts a line by line comparison of the TRACS system and voucher. The results are forwarded to owners/management agents to assist them in maintaining the HUD mandated 85% of current certifications in TRACS. When asked if this process is helpful 41% strongly agreed, 19% moderately agreed, and 9% slightly agreed. 31% left the question blank.

Suggestions and comments to improve the voucher reconciliation process include:

“To my knowledge, I think I have only been contacted maybe one time from IFA concerning my HAP's, that is why I left the above questions not checked, as to me, they do not apply. (I guess I have to check something or I cannot send this e-mail, thus the reason for my answers.)”

“They change my HAPS without notice and no time for me to send corrections. The follow-up is always way late in the month and we are required to have the HAPS to them by the 10th of the month.”

“I am very new at this and when EPS did it software conversion it was very confusing. We had errors from a long time ago. Depending on the person I was dealing with at EPS, the response varied from patient and kind to rather insulting.”

Special Claims

30% of respondents submitted special claims in the past year. 33% did not submit a request for claims. 36% left the question unanswered.

19% strongly agreed that claims were processed in a timely manner. 9% moderately agreed, and 3% moderately disagreed. 69% left the question blank.

When asked if the IFA team member processing the claim provided technical assistance and was also courteous and professional, 22% strongly agreed, 9% moderately agreed, and 69% left the question blank.

When asked if phone calls and e-mails were returned in a timely manner, 25% strongly agreed, 3% moderately agreed, 3% slightly agreed, and 69% left the question unanswered.

Suggestions and comments to improve the special claims process included:

"If I need assistance or if there was correspondence, all was done well."

EPS, Inc.

53% of respondents strongly agree the EPS staff is courteous and professional. 9% moderately agree. 38% left the question unanswered.

41% of owners/management agents/property managers strongly agree that the EPS team member provided technical assistance. 16% moderately agree, and 6% slightly agree. 38% left the question blank.

When asked if EPS, Inc., responded to calls within a reasonable time, 44% of respondents strongly agree that EPS is responsive to phone calls and e-mails. 16% moderately agree, while 3% moderately disagree. 38% left this question blank.

Suggestions and comments to improve the quality and delivery of the voucher reconciliation process include:

"Generally I am referred to my software people."

Other Information

When asked if the IFA website was used, 44% of respondents said yes, 25% said no, and 31% left the question unanswered.

Suggestions and comments to improve the IFA website include:

"I don't know about the website, but I will say that I have found IFA not to be too helpful when I have specific questions about handbook issues. I have already looked in the handbook before calling IFA. Either I could not find what I was looking for, or I would have found the answer, but not to my satisfaction, most often being that my case was not "black or white". When I call IFA, it is because I feel I need more direction. I must say that [REDACTED], my first IFA contact, was very helpful. [REDACTED] became more helpful as time went along, and now I have just begun to work with [REDACTED]. I guess I am not at ease when I need to call IFA for handbook issues."

"I cannot complete this survey because it wants answers to questions that I cannot answer. Much of the work done on rent increases, vouchers, etc, is done at the main office. I have

always been highly satisfied with the help I get and the visits that [REDACTED] has made to my site. He is always helpful and always timely. My direct experience with IFA is a very positive one."

"Would it be possible to e-mail any new changes?"

Overall Satisfaction

When presented with the statement, "Generally I am satisfied with IFA's services," 50% of respondents strongly agree, 9% moderately agree, 3% slightly agree, 0% moderately disagree, 3% strongly disagree, and 34% left the question blank.

